

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING
ROOM 113
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1999
9 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Kathy Campbell, Chair
Larry Hudkins, Vice Chair
Bob Workman
Linda Steinman
Bernie Heier

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer
Dave Johnson, Deputy County Attorney
Bruce Medcalf, County Clerk
Gwen Thorpe, Deputy County Clerk
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

Larry Hudkins, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order.

AGENDA ITEM

- 1 ARCHITECTURAL UPDATE** - Jim Hille, Sinclair Hille & Associates Inc.; Dennis Banks, Attention Center Director; Michelle Schindler, Attention Center Deputy Director; Greg Pettibone, Project Manager for the new Juvenile Detention Facility; Mike Thurber, Corrections Director

Jim Hille, Sinclair Hille & Associates Inc., explained that design of the new Juvenile Detention Facility is based upon the existing conventional/cook-serve method of food service provided by the Corrections Department. He added that infrastructure will be included to allow for adaptations to the method of food service.

- a. Report from Tom Morrow, Tom Morrow Associates, Inc., on Food Service

Tom Morrow, Tom Morrow Associates, Inc., reviewed *Lancaster County Juvenile Detention Center, Foodservices Catering Options* (Exhibit A), stating it is his recommendation that the County proceed with the current conventional/cook-serve method of service.

George Vaughan, Aramark District Manager, added that this is the most efficient and cost effective method of food service.

Campbell arrived at the meeting.

In response to a question from Dennis Banks, Attention Center Director, Morrow stated warmers could be added to the Juvenile Detention Center kitchen design to maintain food temperature and quality during serving delays.

Hille inquired about the adaptability of the jail kitchen to future expansion of that facility.

Morrow said he believed it could be adapted to handle an expanded jail population and continue to serve the Juvenile Detention Facility, with some upgrade of equipment.

Mike Thurber, Corrections Director, said elimination of the jail kitchen in an expansion of the facility, with catering from an off-site location, had also been discussed.

Morrow noted that a survey of other institutional and hospital facilities in the community had determined that none were interested in providing catering service to the County facilities.

2 PROGRAMS

- a. Families First & Foremost Grant Program - Denise Bulling, Special Grants Administrator

Denise Bulling, Special Grants Administrator, gave a brief update on the progress of the Families First & Foremost Grant Program, noting that the Federal Project Director has indicated that the program is right on track.

Bulling reported the availability of an additional \$250,000 in technical assistance grant funds. If funding is received, a portion will be designated for the design of a youth mentoring program to enhance the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program and serve youth not accepted by other programs within the community.

In response to a question from Hudkins, Bulling said getting all of the providers and partners to think in terms of a collaborative effort has been one of the biggest challenges. She added it is also crucial that the program is sustainable over time and complements the Assessment Center process.

Heier remarked it is crucial to have a good evaluation process to ensure that the right programs are in place at the conclusion of funding.

Bulling noted that Dr. Michael Epstein, a national expert in this field, resides in Lincoln and has contracted to evaluate the performance of the Families First & Foremost Grant Program.

Campbell noted that Epstein has been involved with the project from the beginning and it was his evaluation at the end of the first year of the grant funding that led to the shift in administration from Region V to the County.

- b. Evening Reporting Center for Juveniles - Kit Boesch, Human Services Administrator

Kit Boesch, Human Services Administrator, reported that a portion of the Juvenile Accountability Funds were targeted for an evening reporting center for juveniles, with ten available slots. The review committee has recommended that Centerpointe serve in this capacity, with a target opening date of January 1, 2000. She noted that transportation remains a problem, but this may be negotiated in exchange for elimination of Saturday morning supervised hours. Age appropriate curriculum is also being negotiated.

Boesch said locations under consideration are the "J" Street facility and Whitehall. She noted that Bryan/LGH Hospital did not renew its contract with the State of Nebraska for a reporting center, so coordination with the State for combined services may be possible.

c. Expediter Program - Renee' Dozier, Detention Expediter

Renee' Dozier, Detention Expediter, gave a brief update on the Expediter Program, noting that one of the objectives of the program is to decrease the disproportionate confinement of minority youth in the Attention Center. She said one method to address this problem is through the creation of alternatives to detention in the community.

Dozier reported that she spent the first quarter of the program working with 24 youth from the Attention Center. Of this number, 15 were released to some type of service in the community, such as home detention with electronic monitoring, and 6 were diverted into alternative programs, such as day and evening reporting centers. This eliminated 362 days of detention in the Attention Center, for a savings of approximately \$52,000.

Dennis Banks, Attention Center Director, noted that approximately one third of the youth in the Attention Center are placed there for technical violations, such as truancy and violation of curfew. He added that the probation officers have been asked to develop administrative sanctions to address technical violations.

Denise Bulling, Special Grants Administrator, noted that family input is also crucial to the process.

Steinman inquired about the response of the juvenile court judges to the program.

Dozier responded that there has been some hesitation on the part of the judges, but the number of referrals from probation officers has been steadily increasing.

Workman inquired about the recidivism rate for the 15 youth.

Dozier stated none of these youth have been returned to the Attention Center, to date.

In response to a question from Campbell, Dozier stated that a short-term shelter for youth that do not pose a threat to themselves or the community and diversion of youth with mental health issues are also needed.

3 EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE UPDATE - Georgia Glass, Personnel Director; Bill Kostner, City Risk Manager; Steve Snyder & Gina Samland, Marsh, Inc.

Gina Samland, Marsh, Inc., distributed copies of *Lancaster County, 2000 Renewal Presentation* (Exhibit B).

Medical Insurance

Samland reported that Lancaster County has paid \$1,651,161 in premiums for the United Healthcare of the Midlands Medical Plan since January 1, 1999 and incurred claims totaling \$2,256,103, resulting in a projected 34 percent rate increase for the coming year. She stated an analysis of medical claims by type of service revealed that physician service claims are considerably above the normal range. Inpatient hospital, outpatient hospital and pharmacy claims are currently within normal ranges, although pro-active measures may be necessary to keep pharmacy costs down in the future.

Steve Snyder, Marsh, Inc., added that United Healthcare attributed the increase in claim activity to the large number of catastrophic claims within the group, an increased number of individuals utilizing physician services and recent consolidation of hospitals, resulting in less competition.

Samland added that United Healthcare is still working to breakout costs related to the catastrophic claims and emergency room visits.

Bill Kostner, City Risk Manager, said Mutual of Omaha did not provide a thorough claims history, which makes comparison of costs difficult.

Campbell noted that the County may also be seeing some catch-up related to Mutual of Omaha's denial of claims.

In response to a question from Heier, Snyder said the County's plan has a high level of benefits in comparison to other plans. He said plan modifications are suggested, but increasing the co-pay amount for physician visits and prescriptions and modifying deductible amounts would not impact this year's increase.

Campbell noted that a 38.5 percent rate increase was initially projected with the County offering to make plan modifications if that amount could be reduced to 30 percent.

Snyder said United Healthcare had responded that they could not support the plan with less than 34 percent.

In response to a question from Steinman, Samland stated preventive measures and wellness programs have long-range benefits, although their impact on health plan costs is difficult to measure.

Workman asked whether the County should consider shopping for another health plan carrier.

Georgia Glass, Personnel Director, stated that was probably not feasible, since re-enrollment is only two months away.

Hudkins suggested that United Healthcare get tougher with physicians to hold down costs.

Eagan asked whether the County could purchase a policy for re-insurance of catastrophic claims.

Snyder said the current health plan specifies that any amount in excess of \$100,000 for an individual claim is not charged against the claims experience. He added that this pooling level could be reduced, although an additional premium will be required.

Hudkins noted that the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) Blue Cross/Blue Shield Health Plan allows for a pay down of rate increases when there is a positive claims experience.

Melvin Moore, American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME), voiced concern about the impact of the rate increase on employees with low pay scale positions, noting many may opt not to continue insurance coverage. He predicted increased absenteeism, overtime expenses and employees reporting for work while ill, which could have a negative impact on patients at Lancaster Manor. Moore suggested that the County immediately open negotiations with the unions to discuss an addendum to the contract to cover issues such as formularies and increases to co-pays for doctor and emergency room visits and prescriptions. He also suggested that the County consider self-insurance of the health plan.

Greg Meyer, Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), said the County's policy of requiring employees to obtain a doctor's statement when using extended sick leave may be driving costs. He urged the County to reconsider its two-tiered sick leave policy and to shop around for another carrier, noting his union has received indications that better rates could be negotiated.

Moore also voiced concern with regards to the two-tiered sick leave policy, noting that the unions are willing to assist departments in monitoring sick leave usage and addressing instances of sick leave abuse.

Steve Sloggett, Employees Advisory Team (EAT), agreed that the policy of requiring a doctor's statement may be driving physician costs. He also noted concern with current methods of notification and allowing participation in wellness programs.

Dental Insurance

Samland reported a 15.9 percent rate increase for the Ameritas Dental Insurance Plan (See Exhibit B).

Moore suggested that the plan be modified to pay a dollar amount or 50 percent of expenses, whichever is less, for out of network providers.

The Board requested Georgia Glass, Personnel Director, to contact each of the unions to determine receptiveness to plan changes that may reduce rates.

The Board also requested Steve Snyder & Gina Samland, Marsh, Inc., to follow-up with United Healthcare on requested data, with a report back to the Board and requested that representatives of United Health Care give a presentation to members of the Management Team at a meeting on December 2nd.

Also in attendance were the following: Chris Hain, Lincoln Journal-Star Newspaper; Dave Shively, Election Commissioner; Bill Thoreson, Personnel Department; Cori Beattie, County Commissioners' Office; Connie Ahlschwede and Toni Drammeh, County Assessor's Office; Pat Burns, County Treasurer's Office, and Candy Clark, County Engineering Department.

4 ADJOURNMENT

By direction of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned.

Bruce Medcalf
Lancaster County Clerk